

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7518

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAL SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

USICA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SHUM, NU

SUBJECT: RADIO MI PREFERIDA RETURNS TO THE AIR ON DAY AFTER
SCHEDULED NEWS STRIKE HAS MIXED RESULTS

REFS: A) MANAGUA 2845, B) MANAGUA 3807, C) MANAGUA 3773

1. RADIO MI PREFERIDA RETURNED TO THE AIR ON 19 AUGUST
AFTER BEING CLOSED FOR 60 DAYS BY THE GON (REFTEL A).

2. ON THE SAME DAY, LA PRENSA REPORTS THAT AN UNSTATED
NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS MET WITH JOURNALISM STUDENTS AT THE
CENTRAL AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AS PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED
(REFTEL B). WHILE THEY CALLED FOR SUSPENSION OF RADIO NEWS
SERVICES DID NOT MATERIALIZE, THE ASSEMBLY DID FORM A
"NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM OF
EXPRESSION", COMPOSED OF 3 JOURNALISTS, 2 STATION OWNERS
AND 2 NEWS DIRECTORS.

3. THE COMMISSION WILL: A) FORM A WAR CHEST TO PAY FINES

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IMPOSED BY THE GON, B) FORM A TEAM OF LAWYERS TO DEFEND
JOURNALISTS, C) TAKE DIRECT ACTIONS WITH AUTHORITIES
TO DEFEND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, D) MAINTAIN CONTACTS
WITH UNIONS AND OTHER SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS,
E) SEEK AN IMMEDIATE MEETING WITH MINGOV MORA TO APPEAL
CLOSURE OF RADIO "FABULOSO 7" AND THE FINE AGAINST
"DIALOG" (REFTEL C), F) DENOUNCE GON "AGGRESSION" IN

INTERNATIONAL FORA.

4. COMMENT: INsofar AS FRIDAY'S GOAL WAS TO ORGANIZE
A SUSPENSION OF ALL RADIO NEWS SERVICES, THE RADIO
JOURNALIST WORK STOPPAGE APPEARS TO HAVE HAD MIXED RESULTS.
IT IS UNCLEAR HOW MANY JOURNALISTS AND OWNERS WERE AT
THE RALLY, BUT THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THE PROVINCES
HEEDED THE CALL TO JOIN. DURING THE DAY, REGULAR NEWS
SERVICES AND BULLETINS APPARENTLY CONTINUED NORMALLY
AND THE ONLY SUSPENSIONS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN THOSE MADE
BY WELL-KNOWN REPORTERS WHO SUSPENDED THEIR REGULAR
NEWS PROGRAMS ON MANAGUA STATIONS. THESE REPORTERS GENERALLY CAN
BE CLASSIFIED AS OPPOSITIONIST. AT THE SAME TIME HE
ANNOUNCED THE RETURN OF ME PREFERIDA'S CRYSTAL, CNEL.
ALBERTO LUNA, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF RADIO AND TELEVISION,
ANNOUNCED THAT STILL PENDING ARE: A LIBEL ACTION
AGAINST RADIO "MI PREFERIDA" AND TWO ACTIONS AGAINST
RADIO "FUTURA" AND TWO OF ITS NEWS PROGRAMS--THUS
SETTING THE STAGE FOR NEW AND, IN VIEW OF THE NEW
COMMISSION ORGANIZED BY THE JOURNALISTS, MORE
WIDESPREAD CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN LUNA AND THE
BROADCAST MEDIA.
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